

Water Corporation Response to Questions from 30 July 2007 Forum

1. When will a detailed assessment of the pipeline routes for the sites be done?
(This also applies to environmental assessment)

Answer: There are already quite marked differences in areas of vegetation impacted by the 'footprint' of the plant at each site for the community to make informed decisions about their relative merits. A detailed environmental assessment of the pipeline route is unlikely to add value to the information already provided. A detailed environmental assessment of the pipeline route will be conducted of the selected site at the definition phase.

2. Can we have an overview of each site showing the pipelines including the corridors of land cleared for construction and for maintenance?

Yes. See attachment 1.

3. Can we have diagrams showing the route of the power supply to each site and the width of the cleared bush to build and protect these power lines in the event of fire?

This will be discussed with Western Power when the site is chosen.

4. How would the Water Corporation compensate the community in the event of the destruction of the Heritage Environment?

Every effort will be made to preserve and enhance the Heritage Environment and the Water Corporation will work with the community to achieve this. Compensation should not be an issue.

5. As the DEC site is largely State Forest and Construction of a WTP at the 'DEC site' will also depends on the DEC depot successfully relocating to another site does the above assessment of the DEC site need revising?

The Sustainability Criteria was applied to filter the sites being considered from 11 down to the current short list of four for further consideration. Although the filtering process could be considered a 'rough cut', the Water Corporation believes that it delivered a result that matched the community's view and even if the assessment was revised, the DEC site would still have made the short list for further consideration.

6. How do the sites rank in order of vulnerability to closure due to loss of power as a result of fire damage to the power lines?

The vulnerability of each site to fire damage to power supply lines is directly related to the distance of the sites from the power source, which is the transformer situated at the base of Mundaring Weir ie. the greater the distance the greater the risk. Therefore, the site rankings in order of vulnerability (from highest to lowest) are:

1. O'Connor Site
2. DEC Pine Plantation Site
3. DEC Depot Site
4. Site 1 – Below the Weir.

7. Why have all the 'Enhance' criteria from the WC Criteria and Sustainability Principles have been dropped from the process?

Through the community consultation process there have been a number of suggestions about the design of the proposed water treatment plant and the Water Corporation has publicly acknowledged that there is merit in incorporating visitor and educational facilities. The Water Corporation already conducts regular tours for the public and school groups of its existing water and wastewater treatment plants, some of which have some basic visitor and educational display facilities.

The Water Corporation is looking into the possibility of incorporating visitor/educational facilities into the overall long-term plan for the proposed water treatment plant at Mundaring. However, its primary focus is to provide drinking water to the public that meets health standards, as well as a safe and secure water treatment plant.

The Water Corporation has no intention to drop out the 'Enhance' criteria. Water Corporation will always seek to 'Enhance' values under the environmental, social and economic principles if opportunities exist.

8. It has been suggested by the National Trust that a WTP would make a positive contribution to Heritage Values. How would a closed facility be a positive contribution to heritage values?

See answer to Question 7.

9. What is the opinion of the WC about the appearance of the WTP? ie. will it be designed to be a visual assets as has been suggested or will it need to be screened?

The Water Corporation will design a plant that visually is in keeping with the local environment as much as possible. Screening is an option that could be used if it is considered that the plant has an adverse visual impact.

10. How will people whose homes or businesses are affected by the location of the WTP be compensated?

The Water Corporation will work to ensure that the water treatment plant's impact on homes and businesses will be minimal. Therefore we do not consider that compensation will be an issue.

11. Apart from a possible access rd can the boundary of the O'Connor site be pushed back from Mundaring Weir Rd so that the railway track and walks are not included in the site?

Yes, it can.

12. When the optimum location for the site has been found at the O'Connor site will the boundaries be shrunk round it to the area needed to comfortably surround the WTP and drying beds? Is the site large enough to accommodate separate sites for the WTP and the drying beds

If the selected site is at O'Connor, the Water Corporation will consider shrinking the site boundaries. However, some areas, such as vegetation buffer for screening purposes and chlorine buffers, are considered best kept within the site boundaries. Water Corporation will not consider separate sites for the WTP and the drying beds.

13. What is the Water Corporations budget for landscaping the sites?

To be determined at project definition stage.

14. Can we have a breakdown of the costs for each site so that we can see how the figures or revised figures are arrived at?

Yes. See attachment 2.

15. Will the WC use cut or cut and fill when locating plant?

To be determined. But in general, the Water Corporation strives to achieve a balance between cut and fill.

16. Roughly how many cubic meters of earth will need to be relocated to accommodate the Water Treatment Plant and drying beds at each site?

To be determined at project definition stage.

17 Why have all the 'Enhance' criteria from the WC Criteria and Sustainability Principles been dropped?

See answer to Question 7.

18. If Create Value is a core principal of the Water Corporation then in a project of this significance can it demonstrate how it is creating value in the opportunities for business/tourism/CALM properties?

See answer to Question 7.

19. When with results of these assessments be available?

See answer to Question 1.

20. How should the ‘cultivated environment’ in the area, much of which is now used for recreation and is intentionally not being allowed to return to bush, be assessed? I.e. are Back to Bush criteria appropriate in determining the value of ‘cultivated environments’ and should an Environmental Assessment include all aspects of the Water Corporations definition of Environment?

The Water Corporation’s assessment is that the Flora and Fauna assessments consider native flora and fauna and it is a priority to minimise the amount of native vegetation clearing required. Cultivated environment is considered separately in the European Heritage Assessments (as explained in Section 1.2 of the report).

21. Is it the case that the WC asked GDH for an ‘Environmental Assessment’ (see definition) and they got a ‘Back to Bush Assessment’ (which is very different) “because that is what we do” (at GDH)? Were the criteria inadvertently narrowed down to exclude ‘cultivated environment’ in the process of asking GDH to carry out the Environmental Assessment?

GHD were asked to provide Flora and Fauna Assessments which considered native flora and fauna. GHD also conducted a Preliminary Comparative Environmental Impact Assessment which would normally consider cultivated environment, such as heritage; however in this case cultivated environment was considered separately in the European Heritage Assessments and so was not included in the environmental assessments (as explained in Section 1.2 of the report).

22. If you entered the forest now and checked one 20 Ha site every hour, 12 hours a day, 365 days of the year you would still be in the forest and checking around Serpentine in 2011, Dwellingup in 2015, and Collie 2020. Does this and Suzanne’s comment indicate that the forest in this area would not be considered as a limited amenity?

As discussed in the Flora and Fauna reports, the type of vegetation found at the site is relatively well represented in the region. However, this vegetation is still considered of value as remnant native vegetation.

23. Is the overall condition of the health of the Jarrah/Marri ecosystem in the state forest likely to be affected by building a WTP on any of the sites?

As discussed in the environmental assessment building a WTP has the potential to adversely affect the condition of forest in the area of the WTP site, through issues such as erosion, and the spread of weeds and dieback. These issues will need to be managed at all the sites.

24. What are the environmental and financial costs to the WC (and how will these costs be calculated) of relocating the DEC Depot to a new DEC site bearing in mind the following?

- If a site is on Private land the cost of the land will have to be included in the total cost.
- If a site is on government land it is probably either;

- already in use by a government department- which could lead to a tenure chain effect with delays which would have to be taken into consideration
- or not in use by a government department . In which case it is probably going 'Back to Bush' and an environmental assessment would have to be carried out and the results of this assessment included on the overall environmental assessment of the DEC site.

All sites have a cost component to acquire the land and these costs will partially cancel each other out.

25. Why is the Enhance criteria of 'Potential for Environmental Improvement (offsets, rehab, etc)' from the WC Principles Pie diagram and not mentioned?

Enhance criteria will need to be considered at all sites and so this criteria is not so helpful in highlighting the differences between sites. Generally we need to look avoiding and minimising harm to the environment first, and if harm is not completely avoidable we then look at potential for offsetting this harm.

26. Environmental Assessments have been done so can the EPA and the WC give us examples of what sort of offset each site will earn to more than compensate for the environmental damage done at that site?

The Water Corporation primary aim is avoid or minimise the impact on native vegetation so that offsets are not required. The Water Corporation can't give examples until the site of the water treatment plant is chosen and it is determined that offsets are required. This will be determined by the EPA .

27. On close inspection this is not the case but can this method of colouring in the diagrams be clarified?

The vegetation condition ("colouring") was mapped first and then the plant facilities at the various site options were designed to make use of the areas with the worst condition.

28. Why is Criterion 1.9 site Flexibility and Operability on the final 11 criteria written just 'from an engineering perspective'?

The Water Corporation will be the operator of the plant. It therefore considers that it is appropriate to view site 'flexibility and operability' from an engineering perspective as it is ultimately responsible for critical issues such as safety and plant performance.

29. Space for future developments as technology changes and new plant is required. eg. space to 'plumbed in' a large new plant between two of the existing stages

All sites have adequate area to cater for the ultimate size and capacity of the water treatment plant.

30. Space for visitor parking and facilities which we have been told are "a given"

See Answer to Question 7.

31. Will the final site be somewhere within the much larger area described as the O'Connor site? ie. When final locations of the plant and drying beds have been determined will the site boundaries can be 'shrunk to fit that site'

See Answer to Question 12.

32. If so, could the boundaries be pulled back from Mundaring Weir Road to behind the rail track and footpaths and away from neighbours?

See Answer to Question 12.

33. Can the final design incorporate all the mature trees on site?

It is unlikely that all the mature trees could be preserved. But every effort will be made to preserve as many mature trees as possible.

34. Can all significant grass trees on the water treatment plant site be relocated within the design or beside the road?

It is unlikely that all the significant grass trees could be preserved. But every effort will be made to preserve/relocate as many trees as possible.

35. If the general location of the drying beds and the Treatment Plant were swapped and road and pipe access to the treatment plant was from Mundaring weir Rd this would:

- make the pipe runs from and to the existing pipeline a lot shorter
- not create so much noise and light disturbance for people living opposite Firewood Rd.
- save a lot on costs.

Swapping the drying beds and the treatment plant will not make the pipe length any shorter. The amount of traffic to the treatment plant is small compared to the existing volume of traffic along Mundaring Weir Road. Access to the treatment plant via Firewood Road is unlikely to have significant impact on landowners near Firewood Road.

36. If the above suggestion is followed would all the pipe to the O'Connor site be located on the O'Connor site or on an existing water reserve land?

See Answer to Question 35

- 37. Why weren't full floral and fauna surveys conducted on the four short-listed sites?

Preliminary floral and fauna assessments were carried out for the four listed sites. The Water Corporation has been advised by the consultant (GHD) that these assessments are adequate for the site selection purpose.

- 38. Have drainage sump operating costs been included in the costings for the Pine Plantation site option?

This cost has not been included in the Pine Plantation cost, which is already the highest of the six site options. The community are advised to bear that in mind when rating the sites.

- 39. What are the likely transportation routes to proposed treatment plants?

The most viable route will be via the Great Eastern Highway and Mundaring Weir Road to each of the individual sites.

- 40. Are the Lavender Patch Café and the Bundaleer homestead the closest properties to DEC?

Yes.

- 41. What is the existing land tenure at the DEC site?

The southern part and a small portion on the north-east corner of the site are DEC lands, the middle portion is State Forest and the northern portion of the site is a reserve vested in Water Corporation.

- 42. What has been the feedback from DEC and National Park Centre on the water treatment plant proposal?

Feedback from DEC and Perth Hills National Parks Centre is included in the Summary Table for feedback from the Stakeholders/Agencies undertaken by the Water Corporation. See attachment 3.

- 43. Has the impact on the Mundaring to Kalamunda tourist drive been considered?

In terms of the potential visual impact on the Mundaring to Kalamunda tourist drive along the Mundaring Weir Road, the Pine Plantation Site being a distance away from the Weir Road will have the least impact. Proper screening design will minimise the visual impact at both DEC and O'Connor sites. Screening of the Plant at Site 1 which is relatively constraint in space and with the Weir Road running just adjacent to its western and northern boundaries will be a challenging task.

- 44. What consultation will be conducted with indigenous groups?

As recommended by the consultant (AIC) in their report that the Aboriginal families and groups appropriate for this area of the Hills will be involved in an

ethnographic consultation to occur when a preferred site is selected to ascertain the significance of the site under consideration. This will involve desktop study, field survey and site tours for the Aboriginal representatives.

- 45. Were the maps provided during workshop showing areas of vegetation clearing also mailed to all registered forum participants?

Yes. It was included in the mail out dated 13 July 2007.

- 46. What impact will the power supply route have on vegetation clearing?

The Water Corporation will discuss the details for the power supply route with Western Power once a preferred site is selected. The power supply is likely to come from the sub-station below the Weir and as far as possible the existing power lines will be upgraded to cater for the plant requirement to minimise the impact on clearing.

- 47. What will happen to the discharges from the treatment plant?

The supernatant from the plant will either be discharged to the nearest creek/stream or via a pipe back to the Helena River downstream of the Weir. The supernatant will have to comply with EPA requirements. A study will be carried out if it is feasible to pump it back to the head of the plant.